

**A Health Maintenance Organization**

**Serving: Northern, Capital and Mid-Hudson areas of New York**

**Enrollment in this Plan is limited: See page 4 for requirements**

**Enrollment code: 7Y1 Self only**  
**7Y2 Self and family**

Visit the OPM website at <http://www.opm.gov/insure>

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UNITED STATES OFFICE OF  
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
RETIREMENT AND INSURANCE  
SERVICE



**Federal Employees  
Health Benefits Program**

**RI 73-784**

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## Introduction

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HUM HealthCare Systems, Inc., d/b/a, Partners Health Plans, PO Box 140, 333 Glen Street, Glens Falls, NY 12801

This brochure describes the benefits you can receive from Partners Health Plans under its contract (CS 2844) with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), as authorized by the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) law. This brochure is the official statement of benefits on which you can rely. A person enrolled in this Plan is entitled to the benefits described in this brochure. If you are enrolled for Self and Family coverage, each eligible family member is also entitled to these benefits.

OPM negotiates benefits and premiums with each plan annually. Benefit changes are effective January 1, 2000, and are shown on page 3. Premiums are listed at the end of this brochure.

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## Plain Language

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The President and Vice President are making the Government's communication more responsive, accessible and understandable to the public by requiring agencies to use plain language. Health plan representatives and Office of Personnel Management staff have worked cooperatively to make portions of this brochure clearer. In it you will find common, everyday words, except for necessary technical terms; "you" and other personal pronouns; active voice; and short sentences.

We refer to Partners Health Plans as "this Plan" throughout this brochure even though in other legal documents, you will see a plan referred to as a carrier.

These changes do not affect the benefits or services we provide. We have rewritten this brochure only to make it more understandable.

We have not re-written the Benefits section of this brochure. You will find new benefits language next year.

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## How to Use This Brochure

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This brochure has eight sections. Each section has important information you should read. If you want to compare this Plan's benefits with benefits from other FEHB plans, you will find that the brochures have the same format and similar information to make comparisons easier.

1. Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO). This Plan is an HMO. Turn to this section for a brief description of HMOs and how they work.
2. How we change for 2000. If you are a current member and want to see how we have changed, read this section.
3. How to get benefits. Make sure you read this section; it tells you how to get services and how we operate.
4. What to do if we deny your claim or request for service. This section tells you what to do if you disagree with our decision not to pay for your claim or to deny your request for a service.
5. Benefits. Look here to see the benefits we will provide as well as specific exclusions and limitations. You will also find information about non-FEHB benefits.
6. General exclusions - Things we don't cover. Look here to see benefits that we will not provide.
7. Limitations - Rules that affect your benefits. This section describes limits that can affect your benefits.
8. FEHB FACTS. Read this for information about the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program.

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## Section 1. Health Maintenance Organizations

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Health maintenance organizations (HMOs) are health plans that require you to see Plan providers: specific physicians, hospitals and other providers that contract with us. These providers coordinate your health care services. The care you receive includes preventive care such as routine office visits, physical exams, well-baby care and immunizations, as well as treatment for illness and injury.

When you receive services from our providers, you will not have to submit claim forms or pay bills. However, when you receive services you must pay copayments and coinsurance listed in this brochure.

When you receive emergency services outside the plan service area, you may have to submit claim forms.

You should join an HMO because you prefer the plan's benefits, not because a particular provider is available. You cannot change plans because a provider leaves our Plan. We cannot guarantee that any one physician, hospital, or other provider will be available and/or remain under contract with us. Our providers follow generally accepted medical practice when prescribing any course of treatment.

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## Section 2. How We Change for 2000

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### **Program-wide changes**

To keep your premium as low as possible OPM has set a minimum copay of \$10 for all primary care office visits.

This year, you have a right to more information about this Plan, care management, our networks, facilities and providers.

If you have a chronic or disabling condition, and your provider leaves the Plan at our request, you may continue to see your specialist for up to 90 days. If your provider leaves the Plan and you are in the second or third trimester of pregnancy, you may be able to continue seeing your OB/GYN until the end of your postpartum care. You have similar rights if this Plan leaves the FEHB program.

You may review and obtain copies of your medical records on request. If you want copies of your medical records, ask your health care provider for them. You may ask that a physician amend a record that is not accurate, not relevant, or incomplete. If the physician does not amend your record, you may add a brief statement to it. If they do not provide you your records, call us and we will assist you.

If you are over age 50, all FEHB plans will cover a screening sigmoidoscopy every five years. This screening is for colorectal cancer.

### **Changes to this Plan**

Your share of the non-postal premium will increase by 26.8% for Self Only and 46.6% for Self and Family.

There are no other changes to your benefits.

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## Section 3. How to Get Benefits

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### **What is this Plan's service area?**

To enroll with us, you must live or work in our service area. This is where our providers practice. Our service area consists of the New York counties of Albany, Clinton, Columbia, Dutchess, Essex, Franklin, Greene, Hamilton, Rensselaer, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Schenectady, Ulster, Warren and Washington.

Ordinarily, you must get your care from providers who contract with us. If you receive care outside our service area, we will pay only for emergency care urgent care benefits. We will not pay for any other health care services unless authorized in writing by Partners Health Plans Medical Director.

If you or a covered family member move outside of our service area, you can enroll in another plan. If your dependents live out of the area (for example, if your child goes to college in another state), you should consider enrolling in a fee-for-service plan or an HMO that has agreements with affiliates in other area. If you or a family member move, you do not have to wait until Open Season to change plans. Contact your employing or retirement office.

### **How much do I pay for services?**

You must share the cost of some services. This is called either a copayment (a set dollar amount) or coinsurance (a set percent of charges). Please remember you must pay this amount when you receive services. Please refer to the benefit section of the brochure for details.

After you pay \$500 in copayments or coinsurance for one family member, or \$1,500 for two or more family members, you do not have to make any further payments for certain services for the rest of the year. This is called a catastrophic limit. However, copayments or coinsurance for your prescription drugs, dental services do not count toward these limits and you must continue to make these payments.

Be sure to keep accurate records of your copayments and coinsurance, since you are responsible for informing us when you reach the limits.

### **Do I have to submit claims?**

You normally won't have to submit claims to us unless you receive emergency services from a provider who doesn't contract with us. If you file a claim, please send us all of the documents for your claim as soon as possible. You must submit claims by December 31 of the year after the year you received the service. Either OPM or we can extend this deadline if you show that circumstances beyond your control prevented you from filing on time.

### **Who provides my health care?**

Partners Health Plans is a mixed model comprehensive medical plan (HMO) with a network of doctors who treat patients in an individual or group practice arrangement. Each Partners Health Plans member selects a Primary Care Physician (PCP) who coordinates all necessary medical care. You have access to our network of specialists, hospitals, pharmacies, and other professional providers through your PCP. Members may change their primary care physician by notifying the Plan 30 days in advance.

### **What do I do if my primary care physician leaves the Plan?**

Call us at 1-800 447-8610 and press #1. We will help you select a new one.

### **What do I do if I need to go into the hospital?**

Talk to your Plan physician. If you need to be hospitalized, your primary care physician or specialist will make the necessary hospital arrangements and supervise your care. If your hospitalization is scheduled, such as for surgery, your primary care physician must obtain prior approval from us for the hospital stay.

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## Section 3. How to Get Benefits *continued*

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### **What do I do if I'm in the hospital when I join this Plan?**

First, call our Customer Service Department at 1-800-447-8610, press #1. If you are new to the FEHB Program, we will arrange for you to receive care. If you are currently in the FEHB Program and are switching to us, your former plan will pay for the hospital stay until:

- You are discharged, not merely moved to an alternative care center, or
- The day your benefits from your former plan run out, or
- The 92nd day after you became a member of this Plan; whichever happens first.

These provisions only apply to the person who is hospitalized.

### **How do I get specialty care?**

Your primary care physician will arrange your referral to a specialist. Referral to a participating specialist is given at their discretion. The only exception to receiving a written referral is when there is a medical emergency or when your primary care physician has designated another doctor to see his or her patients. Also, women may see a Plan gynecologist for an annual routine examination without referral. You may also self-refer for nutritional counseling (limited to 2 self-referred visits annually), routine vision exam (limited to 1 per year), hearing examination and chiropractic care.

Your primary care physician will tell you the number of visits and what services the specialist should perform. You must return to the primary care physician after the consultation. All follow-up care must be provided or authorized by your primary care physician. If the specialist suggests additional services or visits, you must first check with your primary care physician. Do not see the specialist unless we have issued an authorization for the referral in advance.

When non-Plan specialists or consultants are required, your primary care physician must contact us for approval. We consider benefits for the services of non-plan specialists or consultants only if a Plan specialist cannot provide the covered treatment.

If you need to see a specialist frequently because of a chronic, complex, or serious medical condition, your primary care physician will develop a treatment plan that allows you to see your specialist for a certain number of visits without additional referrals. Your primary care physician will use our criteria in creating your treatment plan and must obtain our written approval. Your primary care physician will provide you with a written referral to a plan provider and you must take it with you to your visit.

### **What do I do if I am seeing a specialist when I enroll?**

Call your primary care physician. Your primary care physician will decide what treatment you need. If they decide to refer you to a specialist, ask if you can see your current specialist. If your current specialist does not participate with us, you must receive treatment from a specialist who does. Generally, we will not pay for you to see a specialist who does not participate with our Plan.

### **What do I do if my specialist leaves the Plan?**

Call your primary care physician, who will arrange for you to see another specialist. You may receive services from your current specialist until we can make arrangements for you to see someone else.

### **What if I have a serious illness and my provider leaves the Plan or this Plan leaves the Program?**

Please contact us if you believe your condition is chronic or disabling. You may be able to continue seeing your provider for up to 90 days after we notify you that we are terminating our contract with the provider (unless the termination is for cause). If you are in the second or third trimester of pregnancy, you may continue to see your OB/GYN until the end of your postpartum care.

You may also be able to continue seeing your provider if your plan drops out of the FEHB Program and you enroll in a new FEHB plan. Contact the new plan and explain that you have a serious or chronic condition, or are in your second or third trimester. Your new plan will pay for or provide your care for up to 90 days after you receive notice that your prior plan is leaving the FEHB Program. If you are in your second or third trimester, your new plan will pay for the OB/GYN care you receive from your current provider until the end of your postpartum care.

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## Section 3. How to Get Benefits *continued*

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### **How do you authorize medical services?**

Your physician must get our approval before sending you to a hospital, referring you to a specialist or recommending follow-up care. Before giving approval, we consider if the service is medically necessary, and if it follows generally accepted medical practice. We will only provide benefits for covered services that are medically necessary to prevent, diagnose or treat your illness or condition.

### **How do you decide if a service is experimental or investigational?**

The Plan uses national standards to evaluate whether or not a service, treatment or supply is experimental or investigation. A team of consultants, physicians and the Plan's Medical Director evaluate each case. Members may contact the Plan directly for more information.

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## Section 4. What to do if We Deny Your Claim or Request for Service

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If we deny services or won't pay your claim, you may ask us to reconsider our decision. Your request must:

1. Be in writing,
2. Refer to specific brochure wording in explaining why you believe our decision is wrong; and
3. Be made within six months from the date of our initial denial or refusal. We may extend this time limit if you show that you were unable to make a timely request due to reasons beyond your control.

We have 30 days from the date we receive your reconsideration request to:

1. Maintain our denial in writing;
2. Pay the claim;
3. Arrange for a health care provider to give you the service; or
4. Ask for more information

If we ask your medical provider for more information, we will send you a copy of our request. We must make a decision within 30 days after we receive the additional information. If we do not receive the requested information within 60 days, we will make our decision based on the information we already have.

### **When may I ask OPM to review a denial?**

You may ask OPM to review the denial after you ask us to reconsider our initial denial or refusal. OPM will determine if we correctly applied the terms of our contract when we denied your claim or request for service.

### **What if I have a serious or life threatening condition and you haven't responded to my request for service?**

Call us at 1-800-447-8610 and we will expedite our review.



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## Section 4. What to do if We Deny Your Claim or Request for Service *continued*

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### **What if you have denied my request for care and my condition is serious or life threatening?**

If we expedite review due to a serious medical condition and deny your claim, we will inform OPM so that they can give your claim expedited treatment too. Alternatively, you can call OPM's health benefits Division 3 at (202) 606-0755 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Serious or life-threatening conditions are ones that may cause permanent loss of bodily functions or death if they are not treated as soon as possible.

### **Are there other time limits?**

You must write to OPM and ask them to review our decision within 90 days after we uphold our initial denial or refusal of service. You may also ask OPM to review your claim if:

1. We do not answer your request within 30 days. In this case, OPM must receive your request within 120 days of the date you asked us to reconsider your claim.
2. You provided us with additional information we asked for, and we do not answer within 30 days. In this case, OPM must receive your request within 120 days of the date we asked you for additional information.

### **What do I send to OPM?**

Your request must be complete or OPM will return it to you. You must send the following information:

1. A statement about why you believe our decision is wrong, based on specific benefit provisions in this brochure;
2. Copies of documents that support your claim, such as physicians' letters, operative reports, bills, medical records, and explanation of benefits (EOB) forms;
3. Copies of all letters you sent us about the claim;
4. Copies of all letters we sent you about the claim; and
5. Your daytime phone number and the best time to call.

If you want OPM to review different claims, you must clearly identify which documents apply to which claim.

### **Who can make the request?**

Those who have a legal right to file a disputed claim with OPM are:

1. Anyone enrolled in the Plan;
2. The estate of a person once enrolled in the Plan; and
3. Medical providers, legal counsel, and other interested parties who are acting as the enrolled person's representative. They must send a copy of the person's specific written consent with the review request.

### **Where should I mail my disputed claim?**

Send your request for OPM review to: Office of Personnel Management, Office of Insurance Programs, Contract Division 3, P. O. Box 436, Washington, D. C. 20044

### **What if OPM upholds the Plan's denial?**

OPM's decision is final. There are no other administrative appeals. If OPM agrees with our decision, your only recourse is to sue.

### **What laws apply if I file a lawsuit?**

If you decide to sue, you must file the suit against OPM in Federal court by December 31 of the third year after the year in which you received the disputed services or supplies.

Federal law governs your lawsuit, benefits, and payment of benefits. The Federal court will base its review on the record that was before OPM when OPM made its decision on your claim. You may recover only the amount of benefits in dispute.

You (or a person acting on your behalf) may not sue to recover benefits on a claim for treatment, services, supplies, or drugs covered by us until you have completed the OPM review procedure described above.

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## Section 4. What to do if We Deny Your Claim or Request for Service *continued*

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### **Your records and the Privacy Act**

Chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code allows OPM to use the information it collects from you and us to determine if our denial of your claim is correct. The information OPM collects during the review process becomes a permanent part of your disputed claims file, and is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act. OPM may disclose this information to support the disputed claim decision. If you file a lawsuit, this information will become part of the court record.

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## Section 5. Medical and Surgical Benefits

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### **What is covered**

We cover a comprehensive range of preventive, diagnostic and treatment services provided by Plan doctors and other Plan providers. This includes all necessary office visits. You pay a \$10 office visit co-pay, but no additional co-pay for laboratory tests and X-rays. Within the service area, house calls will be provided if, in the judgment of the Plan doctor, such care is necessary and appropriate; you pay a \$10 co-pay for a doctor's house call and \$10 for home visits by nurses and health aides.

The following services are included and are subject to the office visit co-pay unless stated otherwise:

- Preventive care, including well-baby care and periodic check-ups; You pay nothing.
- Mammograms are covered as follows: for women age 35 through age 39, one mammogram during these five years; for women age 40 through 49, one mammogram every one or two years; for women age 50 through 64, one mammogram every year; and for women age 65 and above, one mammogram every two years. In addition to routine screening, mammograms are covered when prescribed by the doctor as medically necessary to diagnose or treat your illness. You pay nothing.
- Routine immunizations and boosters
- Consultations by specialists
- Diagnostic procedures, such as laboratory tests and X-rays; You pay nothing
- Complete obstetrical (maternity) care for all covered females, including prenatal, delivery and postnatal care by a Plan doctor. Copays are waived for maternity care. The mother, at her option, may remain in the hospital up to 48 hours after a regular delivery and 96 hours after a cesarean delivery. Inpatient stays will be extended if medically necessary. If you terminate enrollment during pregnancy, benefits will not be provided after coverage under the Plan has ended. Ordinary nursery care of the newborn child during the covered portion of the mother's hospital confinement for maternity will be covered under either a Self Only or Self and Family enrollment. Other care of an infant who requires definitive treatment will be covered only if the infant is covered under a Self and Family enrollment.
- Voluntary sterilization and family planning services
- Diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the eye
- Allergy testing and treatment, including testing and treatment materials (such as allergy serum); You pay nothing for treatment
- The insertion of prosthetic devices, such as pacemakers and artificial joints

## Section 5. Medical and Surgical Benefits *continued*

### What is covered *continued*

- Cornea, heart, heart-lung, lung (single/double), pancreas, kidney and liver transplants; allogeneic (donor) bone marrow transplants; autologous bone marrow transplants (autologous stem cell and peripheral stem cell support) for the following conditions: acute lymphocytic or non-lymphocytic leukemia; advanced Hodgkin's lymphoma; advanced non-Hodgkin's lymphoma; advanced neuroblastoma; breast cancer; multiple melanoma; epithelial ovarian cancer; and testicular, mediastinal, retroperitoneal and ovarian germ cell tumors. Transplants are covered when approved by the Medical Director. Related medical and hospital expenses of the donor are covered when the recipient is covered by the Plan.
- Women who undergo mastectomies may, at their option, have this procedure performed on an inpatient basis and remain in the hospital up to 48 hours after the procedure.
- Dialysis
- Chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and inhalation therapy
- Surgical treatment of morbid obesity
- Orthopedic devices, such as braces; foot orthotics; You pay 20%
- Prosthetic devices, such as artificial limbs, the initial pair of lenses following cataract removal, and breast prosthesis and surgical bras (including replacements). You pay 20%
- Durable medical, such as artificial limbs; You pay 20%
- Durable medical equipment, such as wheelchairs and hospital beds; You pay 20%
- Chiropractic services
- Home health services of nurses and health aides, including intravenous fluids and medications, when prescribed by your Plan doctor who will periodically review the program for continuing appropriateness and need; You pay nothing
- Diabetes self-management education when authorized by your primary care physician or other Plan health care provider and the Plan's Medical Director;

### Limited Benefits

**Oral and maxillofacial surgery** is provided for non-dental surgical and hospitalization procedures for congenital defects, such as cleft lip and cleft palate, and for medical or surgical procedures occurring within or adjacent to the oral cavity or sinuses including, but not limited to, treatment of fractures and excision of tumors and cysts. All other procedures involving the teeth or intra-oral areas surrounding the teeth are not covered, including any dental care involved in the treatment of temporomandibular joint (TMJ) pain dysfunction syndrome. You pay nothing.

**Reconstructive surgery** will be provided to correct a condition resulting from a functional defect or from injury or surgery that has produced a major effect on the member's appearance and if the condition can reasonably be expected to be corrected by such surgery. A patient and her attending physician may decide whether to have breast reconstruction surgery following a mastectomy and whether surgery on the other breast is needed to produce a symmetrical appearance. You pay nothing.

**Short-term rehabilitative therapy** (physical, speech and occupational) is provided on an inpatient or outpatient basis for up to two consecutive months per condition if significant improvement can be expected within two months; you pay \$10 per outpatient session. Speech therapy is limited to treatment of certain speech impairments of organic origin. Occupational therapy is limited to services that assist the member to achieve and maintain self-care and improved functioning in other activities of daily living.

**Diagnosis and treatment of infertility** is covered; you pay 50%. The following types of artificial insemination are covered: intravaginal insemination (IVI); intracervical insemination (ICI); and intrauterine insemination (IUI). You pay 50%. We do not cover the cost of donor sperm. Fertility drugs are covered under the Prescription Drug Benefits. Other assisted reproductive technology (ART) procedures, such as in vitro fertilization and embryo transfer, are not covered.

**Cardiac rehabilitation** following a heart transplant, bypass surgery or a myocardial infarction, is provided for up to 36 sessions. You pay nothing.

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## Section 5. Medical and Surgical Benefits *continued*

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<b>What is not covered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Physical examinations that are not necessary for medical reasons, such as those required for obtaining or continuing employment or insurance, attending school or camp, or travel</li><li>· Reversal of voluntary, surgically-induced sterility</li><li>· Surgery primarily for cosmetic purposes</li><li>· Homemaker services</li><li>· Hearing Aids</li><li>· Any eye surgery that corrects refractive defects of the eye</li><li>· Transplants not listed as covered</li><li>· Long-term rehabilitative therapy</li><li>· Routine Foot Care</li><li>· Eye refractions, corrective eyeglasses, frames, contact lenses and their fitting</li><li>· Dental Care</li><li>· Blood and blood derivatives replaced by the member</li></ul>
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## Hospital/Extended Benefits

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<b>What is covered</b>	We provide a comprehensive range of benefits with no dollar or day limit when you are hospitalized under the care of a Plan doctor. You pay nothing. All necessary services are covered, including:
<b>Hospital Care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Semiprivate room accommodations; when a Plan doctor determines it is medically necessary, the doctor may prescribe private accommodations or private duty nursing care</li><li>· Specialized care units, such as intensive care or cardiac care units</li></ul>
<b>Extended Care</b>	<p>We provide a comprehensive range of benefits with no dollar or day limit when full-time skilled nursing care is necessary and confinement in a skilled nursing facility is medically appropriate as determined by a Plan doctor and approved by the Plan. You pay nothing. All necessary services are covered, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Bed, board and general nursing care</li><li>· Drugs, biologicals, supplies, and equipment ordinarily provided or arranged by the skilled nursing facility when prescribed by a Plan doctor.</li></ul>
<b>Hospice Care</b>	We cover supportive and palliative care for a terminally ill member (up to a total of 210 days of care) in the home or hospice facility. Covered services include inpatient and outpatient care and family bereavement counseling (up to 5 visits). Hospice services are provided under the direction of a Plan doctor who certifies that the patient is in the terminal stages of illness, with a life expectancy of approximately six months or less. You pay nothing.
<b>Ambulance Service</b>	Benefits are provided for ambulance transportation ordered or authorized by a Plan doctor. You pay nothing.

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## Section 5. Hospital/Extended Benefits *continued*

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### Limited Benefits

#### **Inpatient dental procedures**

We cover hospitalization for certain dental procedures when a Plan doctor determines there is a need for hospitalization for reasons totally unrelated to the dental procedure. We will cover the hospitalization, but not the cost of the professional dental services. Conditions for which we cover hospitalization include hemophilia and heart disease; the need for anesthesia, by itself, is not such a condition.

#### **Acute inpatient detoxification**

Hospitalization for medical treatment of substance abuse is limited to emergency care, diagnosis, treatment of medical conditions, and medical management of withdrawal symptoms (acute detoxification) if the Plan doctor determines that outpatient management is not medically appropriate. See page 14 for non-medical substance abuse benefits.

### **What is not covered**

- Personal comfort items, such as telephone and television
- Custodial care, rest cures, domiciliary or convalescent care
- Blood and blood derivatives not replaced by the member

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## Section 5. Emergency Benefits

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### **What is a medical emergency?**

A medical emergency is the sudden and expected onset of a condition or an injury that you believe endangers your life or could result in serious injury or disability unexpected onset of a condition or an injury that you believe endangers your life or could result in serious injury or disability, and requires immediate medical or surgical care. Some problems are emergencies because, if not treated promptly, they might become more serious; examples include deep cuts and broken bones. Others are emergencies because they are potentially life-threatening, such as heart attacks, strokes, poisonings, gunshot wounds, or sudden inability to breathe. There are many other acute conditions that the Plan may determine are medical emergencies what they all have in common is the need for quick action.

### **Emergencies within the service area**

If you are in an emergency situation, please call your primary care doctor. In extreme emergencies, if you are unable to contact your doctor, contact the local emergency system (e.g., call 911) or go to the nearest hospital emergency room. Be sure to tell the emergency room personnel that you are a Plan member so they can notify the Plan. You or a family member must notify us within 48 hours unless it was not reasonably possible to do so. It is your responsibility to ensure that we have been timely notified.

If you need to be hospitalized in a non-Plan facility, we must be notified within 48 hours or on the first working day following your admission, unless it was not reasonably possible to notify us within that time. If you are hospitalized in non-Plan facilities and a Plan doctor believes care can be better provided in a Plan hospital, you will be transferred when medically feasible with any ambulance charges covered in full.

Benefits are available for care from non-Plan providers in a medical emergency only if delay in reaching a Plan provider would result in death, disability or significant jeopardy to your condition.

To be covered by this Plan, any follow-up care recommended by non-Plan providers must be approved by the Plan or provided by Plan providers.

### **We pay...**

Reasonable charges for emergency services to the extent the services would have been covered if received from Plan providers.

### **You pay...**

\$50 per hospital emergency room visit or \$10 per urgent care center visit for emergency services that are covered benefits of this Plan. If the emergency results in admission to a hospital within 48 hours, we waive the copay.

### **Emergencies outside the service area**

Benefits are available for any medically necessary health service that is immediately required because of injury or unforeseen illness.

If you need to be hospitalized, we must be notified within 48 hours or on the first working day following your admission, unless it was not reasonably possible to notify us within that time. If a Plan doctor believes care can be better provided in a Plan hospital, you will be transferred when medically feasible with any ambulance charges covered in full.

To be covered by this Plan, any follow-up care recommended by non-Plan providers must be approved by the Plan or provided by Plan providers.

### **We pay...**

Reasonable charges for emergency services to the extent the services would have been covered if received from Plan providers.

### **You pay...**

\$50 per hospital emergency room visit or \$10 per urgent care center visit for emergency services that are covered benefits of this Plan. If the emergency results in admission to a hospital within 48 hours, we waive the copay.

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## Section 5. Emergency Benefits *continued*

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### **What is covered**

- Emergency care at a doctor's office or an urgent care center
- Emergency care as an outpatient or inpatient at a hospital, including doctors' services
- Ambulance service approved by the Plan
- Elective care or non-emergency care

### **What is not covered**

- Emergency care provided outside the service area if the need for care could have been foreseen before leaving the service area
- Medical and hospital costs resulting from a normal full-term delivery of a baby outside the service area

### **Filing Claims for non-Plan providers**

With your authorization, we will pay benefits directly to the providers of your emergency care upon receipt of your claims. Physician claims should be submitted on the HCFA 1500 claim form. If you are required to pay for the services, submit itemized bills and your receipts to us along with an explanation of the services and the identification information from your ID card.

We will send payment to you unless we deny benefits for your claim. If we do, we will send you a written notice of our decision, including the reason for the denial and the provisions of the contract on which we based our decision. If you disagree with us, you may request that we reconsider our decision in accordance with the disputed claims procedures described on page 6.

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## Section 5. Mental Conditions/Substance Abuse Benefits

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### Mental Conditions

<b>What is covered</b>	<p>To the extent shown below, the Plan provides the following services necessary for the diagnosis and treatment of acute psychiatric conditions, including the treatment of mental illness or disorders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Diagnostic evaluation</li><li>· Psychological testing</li><li>· Psychiatric treatment (including individual and group therapy)</li><li>· Hospitalization (including inpatient professional services)</li></ul>
<b>Outpatient care</b>	<p>Up to 30 outpatient visits to Plan doctors or other psychiatric personnel each calendar year. You pay a \$10 copay for each covered visit and all charges thereafter.</p>
<b>Inpatient care</b>	<p>Up to 30 days of hospitalization each calendar year. You pay nothing for the first 30 days and all charges thereafter.</p>

<b>What is not covered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Care for psychiatric conditions that in the professional judgment of Plan doctors are not subject to significant improvement through relatively short-term treatment.</li><li>· Psychiatric evaluation or therapy on court order or as a condition of parole or probation, unless determined by a Plan doctor to be necessary and appropriate</li><li>· Psychological testing that is not medically necessary to determine the appropriate treatment of a short-term psychiatric condition.</li></ul>
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### Substance Abuse

<b>What is covered</b>	<p>This Plan provides medical and hospital services such as acute detoxification services for the medical, non-psychiatric aspects of substance abuse, including alcoholism and drug addiction, the same as for any other illness or condition.</p>
<b>Outpatient care</b>	<p>Up to 60 outpatient visits to Plan providers for treatment each calendar year; you pay a \$10 co-pay for each covered visit and all charges thereafter. Up to 20 of the 60 outpatient visits may be used for family therapy of covered dependents.</p>
<b>Inpatient care</b>	<p>Up to 30 days per calendar year in a substance abuse rehabilitation (intermediate care) program in an alcohol or drug rehabilitation center approved by the Plan; you pay nothing during the benefit period and all charges thereafter.</p>
<b>What is not covered</b>	<p>Treatment that is not authorized by a Plan doctor.</p>



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## Section 5. Prescription Drug Benefits

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### What is Covered

Prescription drugs prescribed by a Plan or referral doctor and obtained at a participating pharmacy will be dispensed for up to 34-day supply. You pay \$5 co-pay per prescription unit or refill of generic drugs or a \$10 copay per prescription unit or refill of name brand drugs, for up to a 34-day supply or 100-unit supply, whichever is less; 240 milliliter 240 milliliters of liquid (8 oz.); 60 grams of ointment, creams or topical preparation; or one commercially prepared unit (i.e., one inhaler, one vial ophthalmic medication or insulin).

Drugs are prescribed by Plan doctors and dispensed in accordance with the Plan's drug formulary. Non-formulary drugs will be covered when prescribed by a Plan doctor.

We use a formulary that was developed by Centrus Pharmaceutical Solutions. Our drug formulary identifies those prescription drug products approved by the Plan for dispensing when appropriate. The list is subject to periodic review and modification and contains generic and name brand drugs. Certain prescription drug products require prior authorization from the Plan. You may obtain a copy of the formulary by contacting our Customer Service Department.

Covered medications and accessories include:

- Drugs for which a prescription is required by Federal law
- Oral contraceptive drugs; contraceptive diaphragms
- Fertility drugs
- Insulin; a co-pay charge applies to each vial
- Diabetic supplies, including insulin syringes, needles, glucose test tablets and test tape, dextrose strips and/or sticks, Benedict's solution or equivalent, glucose monitors and acetone test tablets.
- Disposable needles and syringes needed to inject covered prescribed medication
- Nutritional supplements when prescribed by a Plan physician for the following medical conditions: phenylketonuria, branched-chain ketonuria, galactosemia, or homocystinuria.

Intravenous fluids and medication for home use, some implantable drugs, FDA approved contraceptives (such as Norplant and Depo Provera), and some injectable drugs are covered under Medical and Surgical Benefits.

### Limited Benefits

#### What is not covered

Smoking cessation drugs and medication, including nicotine patches once per lifetime

- Drugs obtained without a prescription or for which there is a non-prescription equivalent available
- Drugs obtained at a non-Plan pharmacy except for out-of-area emergencies
- Vitamins and nutritional substances that can be purchased without a prescription
- Medical supplies such as dressings and antiseptics
- Drugs for cosmetic purposes
- Drugs to enhance athletic performance

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## Section 5. Other Benefits

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### Dental Care

#### What is covered

##### **Accidental injury benefit**

Restorative services and supplies necessary to promptly repair sound and natural teeth within 12 months of the date of the accidental injury. Injury to teeth and soft tissue as a result of chewing is not considered an accidental injury. You pay nothing.

#### What is not covered

- Other dental services not shown as covered

### Vision Care

#### What is covered

In addition to the medical and surgical benefits provided for the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the eye, annual eye refractions (to provide a written lens prescription) may be obtained from Plan providers. You pay \$10 co-pay per visit.

#### What is not covered

- Corrective lenses or frames
- Eye exercises

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## **Section 6. General Exclusions - Things We Don't Cover**

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The exclusions in this section apply to all benefits. Although we may list a specific service as a benefit, we will not cover it unless your Plan doctor determines it is medically necessary to prevent, diagnose, or treat your illness or condition.

We do not cover the following:

- Services, drugs or supplies that are not medically necessary;
- Services not required according to accepted standards of medical, dental, or psychiatric practice;
- Care by non-Plan providers except for authorized referrals or emergencies (see Emergency Benefits) or eligible self-referred services (see Section 3, How do get benefits);
- Experimental or investigational procedures, treatments, drugs or devices;
- Procedures, services, drugs and supplies related to abortions except when the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term or when the pregnancy is the result of an act of rape or incest;
- Procedures, services, drugs and supplies related to sex transformations;
- Services or supplies you receive from a provider or facility barred from the FEHB Program; and
- Expenses you incurred while you were not enrolled in this Plan.

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## Section 7. Limitations - Rules That Affect Your Benefits

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### **Medicare**

Tell us if you or a family member is enrolled in Medicare Part A or B. Medicare will determine who is responsible for paying for medical services and we will coordinate the payments. On occasion, you may need to file a Medicare claim form.

If you are eligible for Medicare, you may enroll in a Medicare+Choice plan and also remain enrolled with us.

If you are an annuitant or former spouse, you can suspend your FEHB coverage and enroll in a Medicare+Choice plan when one is available in your area. For information on suspending your FEHB enrollment and changing to a Medicare+Choice plan, contact your retirement office. If you later want to re-enroll in the FEHB Program, generally you may do so only at the next Open Season.

If you involuntarily lose coverage, or move out of the Medicare+Choice service area, you may re-enroll in the FEHB Program at any time.

If you do not have Medicare Part A or B, you can still be covered under the FEHB Program and your benefits will not be reduced. We cannot require you to enroll in Medicare.

For information on Medicare+Choice plans, contact your local Social Security Administration (SSA) office or request it from SSA at 1-800-638-6833.

### **Other group insurance coverage**

When anyone has coverage with us and with another group health plan, it is called double coverage. You must tell us if you or a family member has double coverage. You must also send us documents about other insurance if we ask for them.

When you have double coverage, one plan is the primary payer; it pays benefits first. The other plan is secondary; it pays benefits next. We decide which insurance is primary according to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners' Guidelines.

If we pay second, we will determine what the reasonable charge for the benefit should be. After the first plan pays, we will pay either what is left of the reasonable charge or our regular benefit, whichever is less. We will not pay more than the reasonable charge. If we are the secondary payer, we may be entitled to receive payment from your primary plan.

We will always provide you with the benefits described in this brochure. Remember: even if you do not file a claim with your other plan, you must still tell us that you have double coverage.

### **Circumstances beyond our control**

Under certain extraordinary circumstances, we may have to delay your services or be unable to provide them. In that case, we will make all reasonable efforts to provide you with necessary care.

### **When others are responsible for injuries**

When you receive money to compensate you for medical or hospital care for injuries or illness that another person caused, you must reimburse us for whatever services we paid for. We will cover the cost of treatment that exceeds the amount you received in the settlement. If you do not seek damages, you must agree to let us try. This is called subrogation. If you need more information, contact us for our subrogation procedures.

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## Section 7. Limitations - Rules That Affect Your Benefits *continued*

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### **TRICARE**

TRICARE is the health care program for members, eligible dependents, and retirees of the military. TRICARE includes the CHAMPUS program. If both TRICARE and this Plan cover you, we are the primary payer. See your TRICARE Health Benefits Advisor if you have questions about TRICARE coverage.

### **Workers' compensation**

We do not cover services that:

- You need because of a workplace-related disease or injury that the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) or a similar Federal or State agency determine they must provide;
- OWCP or a similar agency pays for through a third party injury settlement or other similar proceeding that is based on a claim you filed under OWCP or similar laws.

Once the OWCP or similar agency has paid its maximum benefits for your treatment, we will provide your benefits.

### **Medicaid**

We pay first if both Medicaid and this Plan cover you.

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## Section 8. FEHB FACTS

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### **You have a right to information about your HMO.**

OPM requires that all FEHB plans comply with the Patients' Bill of Rights, which gives you the right to information about your health plan, its networks, providers and facilities. You can also find out about care management, which includes medical practice guidelines, disease management programs and how we determine if procedures are experimental or investigational. OPM's website ([www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov)) lists the specific types of information that we must make available to you.

If you want specific information about us, call 1-800-447-8610 or write to Partners Health Plans, PO Box 140, 333 Glen Street, Glens Falls, NY 12801. You may also contact us by fax at (518) 745-1099.

### **Where do I get information about enrolling in the FEHB Program?**

Your employing or retirement office can answer your questions, and give you a Guide to Federal Employees Health Benefits Plans, brochures for other plans and other materials you need to make an informed decision about:

- When you may change your enrollment;
- How you can cover your family members;
- What happens when you transfer to another Federal agency, go on leave without pay, enter military service, or retire;
- When your enrollment ends; and
- The next Open Season for enrollment.

We don't determine who is eligible for coverage and, in most cases, cannot change your enrollment status without information from your employing or retirement office.

### **When are my benefits and premiums effective?**

The benefits in this brochure are effective on January 1. If you are new to this plan, your coverage and premiums begin on the first day of your first pay period that starts on or after January 1. Annuitants' premiums begin January 1.

### **What happens when I retire?**

When you retire, you can usually stay in the FEHB Program. Generally, you must have been enrolled in the FEHB Program for the last five years of your Federal service. If you do not meet this requirement, you may be eligible for other forms of coverage, such as Temporary Continuation of Coverage, which is described later in this section.

### **What types of coverage are available for my family and me?**

Self-Only coverage is for you alone. Self and Family coverage is for you, your spouse, and your unmarried dependent children under age 22, including any foster or step children your employing or retirement office authorizes coverage for. Under certain circumstances, you may also get coverage for a disabled child 22 years of age or older who is incapable of self-support.

If you have a Self Only enrollment, you may change to a Self and Family enrollment if you marry, give birth or add a child to your family. You may change your enrollment 31 days before to 60 days after you give birth or add the child to your family. The benefits and premiums for your Self and Family enrollment begin on the first day of the pay period in which the child is born or becomes an eligible family member.

Your employing or retirement office will not notify you when a family member is no longer eligible to receive health benefits, nor will we. Please tell us immediately when you add or remove family members from your coverage for any reason, including divorce.

If you or one of your family members is enrolled in one FEHB plan, that person may not be enrolled in another FEHB plan.

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## Section 8. FEHB FACTS *continued*

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### **Are my medical and claims records confidential?**

We will keep your medical and claims information confidential. Only the following will have access to it:

- OPM, this Plan, and subcontractors when they administer this contract,
- This Plan, and appropriate third parties, such as other insurance plans and the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP), when coordinating benefit payments and subrogating claims,
- Law enforcement officials when investigating and/or prosecuting alleged civil or criminal actions,
- OPM and the General Accounting Office when conducting audits,
- Individuals involved in bona fide medical research or education that does not disclose your identity; or
- OPM, when reviewing a disputed claim or defending litigation about a claim.

## **Information for new members**

### **Identification cards**

We will send you an Identification (ID) card. Use your copy of the Health Benefits Election Form, SF-2809, or the OPM annuitant confirmation letter until you receive your ID card. You can also use an Employee Express confirmation letter.

### **What if I paid a deductible under my old plan?**

Your old plan's deductible continues until our coverage begins.

### **Pre-existing conditions**

We will not refuse to cover the treatment of a condition that you or a family member had before you enrolled in this Plan solely because you had the condition before you enrolled.

## **When you lose benefits**

### **What happens if my enrollment in this Plan ends?**

You will receive an additional 31 days of coverage, for no additional premium, when:

- Your enrollment ends, unless you cancel your enrollment, or
- You are a family member no longer eligible for coverage.

You may be eligible for former spouse coverage or Temporary Continuation of Coverage.

### **What is former spouse coverage?**

If you are divorced from a Federal employee or annuitant, you may not continue to get benefits under your former spouse's enrollment. But, you may be eligible for your own FEHB coverage under the spouse equity law. If you are recently divorced or are anticipating a divorce, contact your ex-spouse's employing or retirement office to get more information about your coverage choices.

### **What is TCC?**

Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC). If you leave Federal service or if you lose coverage because you no longer qualify as a family member, you may be eligible for TCC. For example, you can receive TCC if you are not able to continue your FEHB enrollment after you retire. You may not elect TCC if you are fired from your Federal job due to gross misconduct.

Get the RI 79-27, which describes TCC, and the RI 70-5, the Guide to Federal Employees Health Benefits Plans for Temporary Continuation of Coverage and Former Spouse Enrollees from your employing or retirement office.

Key points about TCC:

- You can pick a new plan;
- If you leave Federal service, you can receive TCC for up to 18 months after you separate;
- If you no longer qualify as a family member, you can receive TCC for up to 36 months;

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## Section 8. FEHB FACTS *continued*

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### **What is TCC?** *continued*

- If you or your employing office delay processing your request, you still have to pay premiums from the 32nd day after your regular coverage ends, even if several months have passed.
- You pay the total premium, and generally a 2-percent administrative charge. The government does not share your costs.
- You receive another 31-day extension of coverage when your TCC enrollment ends, unless you cancel your TCC or stop paying the premium.
- You are not eligible for TCC if you can receive regular FEHB Program benefits.

### **How do I enroll in TCC?**

If you leave Federal service your employing office will notify you of your right to enroll under TCC. You must enroll within 60 days of leaving, or receiving this notice, whichever is later.

Children: You must notify your employing or retirement office within 60 days after your child is no longer an eligible family member. That office will send you information about enrolling in TCC. You must enroll your child within 60 days after they become eligible for TCC, or receive this notice, whichever is later.

Former spouses: You or your former spouse must notify your employing or retirement office within 60 days of one of these qualifying events:

- Divorce
- Loss of spouse equity coverage within 36 months after the divorce.

Your employing or retirement office will then send your former spouse information about enrolling in TCC. Your former spouse must enroll within 60 days after the event, which qualifies them for coverage, or receiving the information, whichever is later.

Note: Your child or former spouse loses TCC eligibility unless you or your former spouse notify your employing or retirement office within the 60-day deadline.

### **How can I convert to individual coverage?**

You may convert to an individual policy if:

- Your coverage under TCC or the spouse equity law ends. If you canceled your coverage or did not pay your premium, you cannot convert.
- You decided not to receive coverage under TCC or the spouse equity law; or
- You are not eligible for coverage under TCC or the spouse equity law.

If you leave Federal service, your employing office will notify you if individual coverage is available. You must apply in writing to us within 31 days after you receive this notice. However, if you are a family member who is losing coverage, the employing or retirement office will not notify you. You must apply in writing to us within 31 days after you are no longer eligible for coverage.

Your benefits and rates will differ from those under the FEHB Program; however, you will not have to answer questions about your health, and we will not impose a waiting period or limit your coverage due to pre-existing conditions.

### **How can I get a Certificate of Group Health Plan Coverage?**

If you leave the FEHB Program, we will give you a Certificate of Group Health Plan Coverage that indicates how long you have been enrolled with us. You can use this certificate when getting health insurance or other health care coverage. You must arrange for the other coverage within 63 days of leaving this Plan. Your new plan must reduce or eliminate waiting periods, limitations or exclusions for health related conditions based on the information in the certificate.

If you have been enrolled with us for less than 12 months, but were previously enrolled in other FEHB plans, you may request a certificate from them, as well.



## **Inspector General Advisory: Stop Health Care Fraud!**

Fraud increases the cost of health care for everyone. If you suspect that a physician, pharmacy, or hospital has charged you for services you did not receive, billed you twice for the same service, or misrepresented any information, do the following:

- Call the provider and ask for an explanation. There may be an error.
- If the provider does not resolve the matter, call us at 1-800-447-8610 and explain the situation.

If we do not resolve the issue, call or write:

### **THE HEALTH CARE FRAUD HOTLINE 202-418-3300**

U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Office of the Inspector General Fraud Hotline  
1900 E Street, NW, Room 6400  
Washington, D.C. 20415

### **Penalties for Fraud**

Anyone who falsifies a claim to obtain FEHB Program benefits can be prosecuted for fraud. Also, the Inspector General may investigate anyone who uses an ID card if they:

- Try to obtain services for a person who is not an eligible family member; or
- Are no longer enrolled in the Plan and try to obtain benefits.

Your agency may also take administrative action against you.

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**Notes**

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## Summary of Benefits for Partners Health Plans - 2000

Do not rely on this chart alone. All benefits are provided in full unless otherwise indicated, subject to the limitations and exclusions set forth in the brochure. This chart merely summarizes certain important expenses covered by the Plan. If you wish to enroll or change your enrollment in this Plan, be sure to indicate the correct enrollment code on your enrollment form (codes appear on the cover of this brochure). **ALL SERVICES COVERED UNDER THIS PLAN, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF EMERGENCY CARE, ARE COVERED ONLY WHEN PROVIDED OR ARRANGED BY PLAN DOCTORS.**

	Benefits	Plan pays/provides	Page
<b>Inpatient care</b>	<b>Hospital</b>	Comprehensive range of medical and surgical services without dollar or day limit. Includes in-hospital doctor care, room and board, general nursing care, private room and private nursing care if medically necessary, diagnostic tests, drugs and medical supplies, use of operating room, intensive care and complete maternity care. <b>You pay</b> nothing.....	Page 10
	<b>Extended care</b>	All necessary services, no dollar or day limit. <b>You pay</b> nothing.....	Page 10
	<b>Mental conditions</b>	Diagnosis and treatment of acute psychiatric conditions for up to 30 days of inpatient care per year. <b>You pay</b> nothing.....	Page 14
	<b>Substance abuse</b>	Up to 30 days per year in a substance abuse treatment program. <b>You pay</b> nothing.....	Page 14
<b>Outpatient care</b>		Comprehensive range of services such as diagnosis and treatment of illness or injury, including specialist's care; preventive care, including well-baby care, periodic check-ups and routine immunizations; laboratory tests and X-rays; complete maternity care. <b>You pay</b> a \$10 copay per visit (copay is waived for maternity care); \$10 per house call by a doctor.....	Page 8
	<b>Home health care</b>	All necessary visits by nurses and health aides. <b>You pay</b> nothing.....	Page 9
	<b>Mental conditions</b>	Up to 30 outpatient visits per year. <b>You pay</b> a \$10 copay per visit.....	Page 14
	<b>Substance abuse</b>	Up to 60 outpatient visits per year. <b>You pay</b> a \$10 copay per visit.....	Page 14
<b>Emergency care</b>		Reasonable charges for services and supplies required because of a medical emergency. <b>You pay</b> a \$50 copay to the hospital for each emergency room visit and any charges for services that are not covered by this Plan.....	Page 12
<b>Prescription drugs</b>		Drugs prescribed by a Plan doctor and obtained at a participating pharmacy. <b>You pay</b> a \$5 copay for generic drugs or a \$10 copay for name brand drugs per prescription unit or refill.....	Page 15
<b>Dental care</b>		Accidental injury benefit; <b>you pay</b> nothing.....	Page 16
<b>Vision care</b>		One refraction annually. <b>You pay</b> a \$10 copay per visit.....	Page 16
<b>Out-of-pocket maximum</b>		Copayments are required for a few benefits; however, after your out-of-pocket expenses reach a maximum of \$500 per Self Only or \$1500 per Self and Family enrollment per calendar year, covered benefits will be provided at 100%..	Page 4

## 2000 Rate Information for Partners Health Plans

**Non-Postal rates** apply to most non-Postal enrollees. If you are in a special enrollment category, refer to the FEHB Guide for that category or contact the agency that maintains your health benefits enrollment.

**Postal rates** apply to most career U.S. Postal Service employees. In 2000, two categories of contribution rates, referred to as Category A rates and Category B rates, will apply for certain career employees. If you are a career postal employee, who is not a member of a special postal employment class, refer to the category definitions in, “The Guide to Federal Employees Health Benefits Plans for United States Postal Service Employees,” RI 70-2, to determine which rate applies to you.

Postal rates do not apply to non-career postal employees, postal retirees, certain special postal employment classes or associate members of any postal employee organization. Such persons not subject to postal rates must refer to the applicable “Guide to Federal Employees Health Benefits Plans.”

Type of Enrollment	Code	<u>Non-Postal Premium</u>				<u>Postal Premium A</u>		<u>Postal Premium B</u>	
		<u>Biweekly</u>		<u>Monthly</u>		<u>Biweekly</u>		<u>Biweekly</u>	
		Gov't Share	Your Share	Gov't Share	Your Share	USPS Share	Your Share	USPS Share	Your Share
Self Only	<b>7Y1</b>	<b>\$78.83</b>	<b>\$28.04</b>	<b>\$170.80</b>	<b>\$60.75</b>	<b>\$93.06</b>	<b>\$13.81</b>	<b>\$93.26</b>	<b>\$13.61</b>
Self and Family	<b>7Y2</b>	<b>\$175.97</b>	<b>\$101.11</b>	<b>\$381.27</b>	<b>\$219.07</b>	<b>\$207.74</b>	<b>\$69.34</b>	<b>\$201.02</b>	<b>\$76.06</b>